3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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Offenses against the native regulations, which control such aspects of communal life as village planning, sanitation, house building, and gardening, are tried in special district and provincial courts for natives only. The district court for natives has jurisdiction over natives of a district and is presided over by a native stipendiary magistrate. Petty offenses against native regulations are tried in it.[23] Appeal from the district court may be made to the provincial court for natives. This court has jurisdiction over a magisterial province. The provincial court is composed of the district commissioner of the province sitting with the native stipendiary magistrate, and has minor criminal and civil powers over the natives and can hear petitions for divorce from natives.[24] Appeal from the native provincial court may be made to the supreme court of the colony.

These native courts are supplements to the administration of justice in the provinces. Throughout the colony justice is administrated by means of a supreme court and various district courts of summary jurisdiction.[25]

Justice in the colony is enforced by the constabulary which consists of over two hundred police officers divided into twenty-six detachments.[26] None of this force is stationed in southern Lau. Natives sentenced to serve a jail term are taken from the southern islands to the jail at Lakemba. A

[23] The district court deals with offenses involving a maximum penalty of 40 shillings or imprisonment for two months, and in civil matters up to the value of 80 shillings.

[24] The actual decision in divorce cases is, however, made by the chief justice of the colony.

[25] The supreme court is presided over by the chief justice. It has the same jurisdiction as that of His Majesty's high court of justice in England. It is also a court of equity and court of probate. The supreme court has four sessions per year in Suva and also a circuit. Appeal may be made in certain cases to the judicial committee of the privy council.

The district courts of summary jurisdiction, both criminal and civil, are presided over by the district commissioner. On the criminal side he has the power to inflict a maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment, and on the civil side to deal with claims of value less than £50.

[26] In 1936 the constabulary was composed of 18 Europeans, 88 Indians, and 111 Fijians. (*Annual Report*, Fiji, 1936, p. 56.)